

men and women to combat since the horrendous attacks of 9/11. One day is not long enough for us to ever fully honor those parents who have had to suffer the unimaginable pain of losing a child, but we will try.

Across the State of Colorado and the rest of the Nation, many of these mothers have come together not only for support but also to volunteer their time serving veterans and families of soldiers, encouraging patriotism and national pride, and honoring their children through service and allegiance to the United States. Through their volunteer efforts, they keep alive the memory and spirit of those whose lives were lost in the war. They continue to inspire compassion, strength, and faithfulness for all Americans.

To mark this weekend, the Blue Star Mothers of Colorado will be hosting Colorado's first annual Gold Star Mother's Day Weekend. There will be several events throughout the weekend celebrating the lives of those soldiers who so courageously gave the ultimate sacrifice for their Nation. Unfortunately I will not be able to attend the ceremony myself, but my wife Joan and I want to send our thoughts and prayers to those who will be attending the event.

Words truly cannot express America's gratitude for our Armed Forces and their service and sacrifice to this Nation. Those who have fallen have served a cause greater than themselves and deserve special honor. To their mothers and fathers, you too deserve special honor as you continue to carry on the patriotic duties and legacy that your son or daughter sadly could not. I thank you for your courage and for your service to the United States of America.

Over the last 3 years, our Nation has been locked in a terrible struggle against radical extremists across the Middle East. And I will readily admit that this fight is one that we did not anticipate. But I do know that every life given in the name of freedom has not been given in vain.

While they continually experience many dangerous challenges, our men and women of our Armed Forces continue making strides in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have fought a terrible enemy that has no regard for human life.

Yet despite our challenges, we have seen tremendous progress, especially towards helping to create partners in our fight against terrorism worldwide. Indeed, much of our success depends on the men and women in the new democratic governments formed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they are stepping up to the challenge. In Iraq, people from all walks of life—Sunnis, Shia, and Kurds—have participated in multiple elections and referendums across the country for the first time in Iraq's history.

Remarkably, after democratic elections in Afghanistan, women are holding positions of power in local and na-

tional governments, something that was impossible under the Taliban's rule. The sovereign governments are working with regional and international partners in achieving united democracies—an achievement only allowed through our fighting men and women in combat.

Many remarkable achievements have been made through the sacrifices of the men and women in the military, but perhaps the most important of all is what has not occurred in our own country. Since we took military action against these Islamic extremists and brought the fight to them, we have not seen an attack on American soil. The sacrifices that the sons and daughters of our Gold Star Mothers have made and continue to make are protecting us here on our shores.

Unfortunately, we have seen that even after the death of terrorist leaders like Abu Musab al-Zarqawi that the forces of the Islamic extremists vow that they will continue to wage war on American civilians. Our success against this type of enemy is only ensured by the brave men and women of our Armed Forces. They provide the safety and security to our nation, and we are truly grateful for what they have done. While the cost has been high, the cost of doing nothing would be even greater. These words provide little comfort to the families that have lost loved ones. But we will always remember those who have lost their lives in support of our freedom, and thank them for their sacrifice. I ask unanimous consent for the list of fallen heroes from Colorado be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

PFC Travis W. Anderson
PFC Shawn M. Atkins
SGT Daniel A. Bader
SGT Douglas E. Bascom
SGT Thomas F. Broomhead
Petty Officer 2nd Class Danny P. Dietz
LCpl Mark E. Engel
SGT Christopher M. Falkel
PFC George R. Geer
LCpl Evenor C. Herrera
CPL Benjamin D. Hoeffner
SGT Theodore S. Holder II
MAG Douglas A. La Bouff
SSG Mark A. Lawton
SPC Derrick J. Lutters
PFC Tyler R. MacKenzie
LCpl Chad B. Maynard
SGT Dimitri Muscat
SGT Larry W. Pankey Jr.
SSG Michael C. Parrott
PFC Chance R. Phelps
PFC Ryan E. Reed
SFC Randall S. Rehn
SSG Gavin B. Reinke
SGT Luis R. Reyes
PFC Andrew G. Riedel
CAPT Russell B. Rippetoe
PFC Henry C. Risner
SFC Daniel A. Romero
LCpl Gregory P. Rund
SSG Barry Sanford
SSG Michael B. Shackelford
CPL Christopher F. Sitton
LCpl Thomas J. Slocum
LCpl Jeremy P. Tamburello
SSG Justin L. Vasquez

2LT John S. Vaughan
CAPT Ian P. Weikel
SPC Dana N. Wilson
SGT Michael E. Yashinski

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, in remembering their lives, we also honor them and celebrate the joy that they have brought to their families. To the Gold Star and Blue Star mothers and fathers, I salute you, and thank you for your service to this nation.

NATIONAL SCHOOL BACKPACK AWARENESS DAY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise in recognition of the fifth annual National School Backpack Awareness Day, September 20, 2006. Today, the American Occupational Therapy Association, AOTA, in collaboration with more than 350 occupational therapy practitioners across the country will be educating thousands of children and their families about how to stay healthy and succeed in school, especially how to prevent backpack related injuries. These organizations are taking real steps towards protecting our children during their most formative years.

Occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants play an incredibly important role in our local communities. Occupational therapy practitioners work directly with students, parents, and teachers to modify educational environments so that all students can achieve academic success. They often develop plans to improve function and productivity, so as to maximize independence within the academic environment. Their knowledge about how children can stay healthy and succeed in school is invaluable. Today's effort to protect them from backpack injuries is much needed, and I know it will have a positive impact on thousands of families.

Many children enjoy picking out a backpack at the start of the school year, usually based on a certain color or design, but if worn incorrectly or if too heavy, there is a serious potential for injury. In light of this concern, today at schools, stores, hospitals, and shopping malls all over the Nation, children's backpacks will be "weighed-in." This will ensure that children are not carrying more than 15 percent of their bodyweight on their back. According to U.S. and international studies, children using overloaded and improperly worn backpacks experience neck, shoulder and back pain. Furthermore, children wearing backpacks improperly suffer from compromised breathing and increased fatigue at significantly higher rates than students wearing their backpacks properly and with appropriate loads. In our great State of New Jersey, these "weigh-ins" are being conducted at nine locations throughout the State. By the end of the day, children all over America will be healthier and equipped with information about how to properly load and carry a backpack.

National School Backpack Awareness Day is a prime example of how occupational therapy works within our schools and communities to promote wellness and improve quality of life. I know today will be a success and ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating September 20, 2006, as National School Backpack Awareness Day.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

STILLWATER MINING COMPANY

• Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I once heard my home State of Montana described as a small town with long streets and I can't think of a more apt description. We are all neighbors, and one of our cardinal rules is if your neighbor needs help, lend a hand. Last month, as fires raged across our State, many of our neighbors needed a hand and Montanans from all over Big Sky country pitched into help. Among the first to help out was the Stillwater Mining Company.

As many are aware, the massive Derby Mountain Fire caused serious damage around Big Timber, MT. At one time the Derby Mountain Fire was the top priority fire in the country. When the communities around Big Timber needed help, the folks at the Stillwater Mining Company rolled up their sleeves and figured out how they could help.

The Stillwater Mining Company knew what a massive disaster the Derby Fire had become, and how those fighting the fire needed every pair of hands they could get. To get more boots on the ground, the Stillwater Mining Company provided full pay leave to all of their employees who volunteered to either fight the fire or to assist the fire crews. They paid for every meal that the Red Cross served at the Derby Fire. They sent their human resource staffers to the area to help manage the evacuations. Their computer mapping specialists helped to make highly sophisticated fire maps. They sent their own personal bulldozers to the fire lines. They sent their sprinkler systems to the front lines to saturate areas to protect homes. They also allowed helicopters to dip into their mining ponds. And all of this was done by the Stillwater Mining Company while at the same time they were forced to shut their mines down for 8 days due to the fire.

The Stillwater Mining Company saw a neighbor in need and without hesitation they lent a hand. I am proud to call them neighbor, and in Montana there is no higher compliment.●

IN MEMORY OF JULIANNE HAMMOND

• Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, earlier this month, the Wilmington community lost Julianne Hammond—one of our most prominent lawyers and a good friend to my wife Jill.

She was the 28th woman ever admitted to practice law in Delaware and worked for 30 years in real estate finance and land use law, changing the landscape of our city with many redevelopment efforts.

Juli was a very outgoing, optimistic, happy person, who never let her illness get her down even as she battled breast cancer for 18 years. She literally worked until a week or so before she passed away, never talking about how sick she was.

She also was a very caring person and wanted to help others in their battles with cancer. That is how we got to know Juli. In 1994, she became a founding board member of the Biden Breast Health Initiative to help educate young women on the importance of breast self-exam and early detection. She would assist Jill with special events and raising funds, doing everything and anything to help others.

I don't know how she had the time and energy, but Juli also served as vice president of the board of the Wilmington Economic Development Corporation, a board member of the Land Use Committee for the Committee of 100, and secretary of the board of the Wellness Community of Delaware.

Wilmington and New Castle County will not be the same without Juli. I know my colleagues join Jill and me in extending our deepest sympathies to her family.

MONTANA'S HEROES

• Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, the great America poet Robert Frost once said that "good fences make good neighbors." In my home State of Montana, nothing could be further from the truth. Although our State is more than 600 miles wide, and nearly 300 miles long, we really are one big small town. And when one of our neighbors is in need, we are always willing to roll up our sleeves and lend a helping hand.

During this year's fire season, many of our neighbors were in dire need as fires raged across our State. Nearly 1 million acres burned, an area larger than the State of Rhode Island. As homes, livestock, crops, and land burned, Montanans from one corner of the State to the other lost everything they had. But from this destruction and rubble, arose many Montana heroes, and I would like to take a moment to publicly recognize them.

On the front lines were all the brave wild land firefighters. These men and women came from all over the country, and even some foreign countries, to put their lives on the line for people they had never met. While it is easy to be a Monday morning quarterback and criticize some of their techniques, it is clear that these brave men and women deserve nothing but praise. When I visited the fires and I looked into the men and women's eyes after working 12 hour days in 100 degree heat, as they were so exhausted they could hardly stand, I knew that they had given ev-

erything their all, 110 percent, to protect Montanans. These men and women sought no praise or recognition, and whenever they were congratulated they would merely say, "We're just doing our jobs." But these men and women weren't just doing a job; they were saving lives, protecting property, and nothing could be more heroic. Words cannot do their deeds justice but on behalf of every Montanan, I would like to offer my deepest thanks.

And these men and women couldn't have done their job without all the support from different people and agencies throughout the State. All the folks at the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, the Montana Department of Emergency Services, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Montana State and local law enforcement, the local governments and county commissioners, volunteer fire departments, and the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group, which coordinated all these efforts, and their Federal partners. All these folks worked tirelessly to manage these blazes. Day or night they were constantly monitoring the fires, providing important updates, and making sure the people of the affected communities had every resource possible to deal with these disasters.

I would also like to recognize all the people who worked behind the scenes, the people whose names might not appear in the news, but without whose effort these fires couldn't have been contained. The busdrivers, the local volunteers, the food service providers, the pilots, the list could go on and on. Without these services, the damage to my home State would have been much worse.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Montanans who rolled up their sleeves, saw a neighbor in need, and helped out. Whether it was ranchers helping move livestock, community organizations and churches holding clothing drives, or people opening their homes to those who had nowhere to go, all these people truly exemplify the Montana spirit.

The 2006 fire season will go down in history as one of worst in our State's history. Yet it will also go down as a time when neighbors helped neighbors, when people traveled hundreds of miles to lend a hand to a friend. It will go down as a time of heroes.●

IN MEMORY OF ELLA LITTLE CROMWELL

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today in memory of Ella Little Cromwell, a truly remarkable woman from Hartford who passed away Sunday, September 17. Mrs. Cromwell was one of the most engaging and charismatic people I have ever had the pleasure to know. Through tireless effort, Ella Cromwell became a real political institution in Hartford, and was a leader in many efforts to promote justice and equal rights.